

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of :  
Caroline Dean, et al. :  
Serial No. 09/890,220 :  
Filed July 27, 2001 :  
For: METHODS AND MEANS FOR :  
MODIFICATION OF PLANT :  
CHARACTERISTICS USING THE :  
VERNALIZATION GENE VRN2 :

10/890,220

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Please amend the above-identified patent application as follows:

**In the specification:**

At page 88 of the application, on a separate sheet, please add the following abstract:

- [An isolated nucleic acid obtainable from the VRN2 locus of a plant, which nucleic acid encodes a polypeptide which is capable of affecting one or more physical characteristics of a plant into which the nucleic acid is introduced, the physical characteristics being selected from vernalization response, flowering time, leaf size, and/or shape or shade avoidance response; alleles, fragment and derivatives thereof; polypeptides encoded by such nucleic acids; antibodies to such peptides.] -

**In the claims:**

Please add the following new claims:

60. An isolated nucleic acid which comprises a variant sequence which is a homologous variant of a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 1,